DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 359 153 SP 034 572

AUTHOR Holmes, Edward W.; Blair, A. Karen
TITLE Creation of a Journal for a Graduate Seminar.
PUB DATE Feb 93
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (73rd, Los Angeles, CA, February 13-17, 1993).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Course Descriptions; Course Objectives; Educational Trends; *Education Courses; Elementary Education; Elementary School Teachers; Graduate Students; Higher Education; *Interdisciplinary Approach; *Journal Writing; Masters Programs; Reading Instruction; *Seminars; *Student Publications; Teacher Education; *Writing for Publication
IDENTIFIERS *Teacher Researchers

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the creation of a journal entitled "Issues in Education" by eight elementary education and reading students in a graduate seminar course. The journal, published each semester by the Elementary Education Department, Towson State University (Maryland), presents articles illustrative of current teacher concerns. Topics relate to issues in education that are especially important in the students' own classrooms, schools, or school systems. The seminar students' themes included the need for change or restructuring in many areas of education, the unique needs of individual students, various teacher roles, grouping, critical thinking, writing workshop, television viewing, and the integrated language arts. Students worked in peer response groups to help one another with preliminary and final drafts of their articles. Brief annotated bibliographies about the research topics were required, and at semester's end students presented their journal articles orally before the seminar group. Course evaluations indicated that journal article writing gave the graduate students an audience, thereby making their work more real. An appendix provides oral report specifications. (Contains 15 references.) (LL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED359153

Creation of a Journal for a Graduate Seminar

Edward W. Holmes, Professor
Elementary Education Department
and
A. Karen Blair, Assistant Professor
General Education Department
College of Education
Towson State University
Baltimore, MD 21204-7097
(410) 830-2346

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E. Holmes

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Association of Teachers Educators' Annual Meeting
Los Angeles, California
February 16, 1993

SP034572

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Creation of a Journal for a
Graduate Seminar

Introduction

We teach the final graduate seminar courses in elementary education and reading. The seminar courses are required and serve as capstone courses in both graduate programs. Students may elect to do graduate theses, but most students choose to take the graduate seminar courses instead. The students in the elementary education program must also take a required research course, which is quantitatively oriented, prior to the graduate seminar. Students may elect to do a seminar paper or a journal article in the elementary education course.

In the reading seminar, the journal article was not an option. When we agreed to combine forces this past spring, we also agreed to follow the same requirements in both seminars. In fact, we decided to encourage our eight students to choose journal articles so that we could prepare another edition of the journal together. We utilized contract grading. This grading procedure ensured that the students worked closely with one another. It eliminated the concern about a final course grade from the process of peer review of their journal articles.

The Journal

Neither of us had sufficient enrollment to offer our graduate seminars last spring. Thus, we decided to pool our resources so as not to disappoint the students who expected to graduate in May. We were concerned that our two groups of students might not mesh and that they would be reluctant to do a journal together. Such was not the case; the eight students we worked with were quite enthusiastic about our common venture.

The two seminar courses, ELED 775 Seminar in Elementary Education and EDUC 729 Seminar in Reading, met on a quasi-independent study basis individually; we also met collectively as one class. Essentially, we team taught the two seminars together. While there were two separate course outlines and supplementary materials for each course, we coordinated our calendars and activities so that we could meet together when appropriate. We utilized Writer's Workshop and peer response groups, and in effect, the eight students served as one another's editors.

In searching for topics for their work, students were asked to think about issues in education that were especially important to them in their own classrooms, their schools or their school systems. There was a nice range of topics chosen by the eight students. The topics appeared to fit together nicely when we finally put the journal together. Three students wrote about various teacher roles; the others wrote about grouping, critical thinking, writing workshop, television viewing and the integrated language arts. They were asked to prepare brief annotated bibliographies about their research topics to share with one another. They were also asked to select the most significant reference from their bibliographies and lead a brief presentation and discussion about that citation for the other members of their class. In so doing, students were requested to distribute copies of their selected references prior to their presentations. In this instance, every student in both classes received the materials, but the graduate reading students met with their instructor for their

discussions, and the graduate elementary education students met with their instructor for theirs. These presentations and follow-up discussions served as a kind of "dress rehearsal" for the students' presentations of their journal topics before the combined classes at the end of the semester. We devised an Oral Report Specifications sheet for our students' use for both presentations (See Appendix). Students were also required to provide everyone with a précis of their journal articles one week in advance of their presentations. The Oral Report Specifications sheet was used as a review/response sheet by everyone for each presentation. Thus, students received feedback along the way about their presentation skills for the presentations they made during the semester.

Students were expected to meet periodically in peer response groups to help one another prepare the preliminary and final drafts of their journal articles. At the end of the semester, students turned in paper and disk copies of their journal articles for further editing. Students had in their possession a previous edition of the Journal, which served as a model for their writing. Students also received copies of a number of references to help them. Many of these references are listed in the reference section of this paper. One student remained on the project and served as a technical editor during the summer school sessions that followed and received independent study credit for her assistance.

The students chose a professor from the College of Education and an administrator from one of the metropolitan area school

systems to write their reflections on the articles in the Journal. Funding for the preparation and printing of the Journal was underwritten by the Dean of the College of Education, and the printing of the Journal was done on campus. Lastly, at the conclusion of the semester, students were asked to prepare a written evaluation of the course and their graduate programs. We asked that this paper be turned in one week in advance of the last class session. This last session was a final evaluation seminar where students could discuss the strengths and needs of the seminar courses, the effectiveness of the journal article option and their graduate programs.

Conclusions and Implications

One student wrote the following at the conclusion of the semester:

> I would like to express my appreciation in being allowed to take the Seminar in Elementary Education as an independent course. It was a positive experience and I am delighted with the chance to have my efforts published. To me, this option really appears to put theory into practice. We encourage our students to become involved in the writing process and celebrate their writings. It seems a logical progression to allow and encourage graduate students to do the same.

Her observations crystallize nicely what we think we are trying to do with our graduate students. Unlike a thesis or a seminar paper, the journal article option gives our students an audience and makes their work more real. Having been through the process of writing an article, we hope that some of our students will continue writing for possible publication. We think understanding the draft process in writing gives our students insight into what is involved in

having any piece of writing published. Our project, then, has been, we think, innovative and student centered. The reorganization of the two graduate seminar courses proved to be an exciting way in which to bring closure for these students at the end of their graduate programs. The creation of a journal in these courses may have helped to ensure the ongoing participation of these students in their profession after leaving the university campus.

Appendix

Towson State University
College of Education

EDUC 729 Seminar in Reading
ELED 775 Seminar in Elementary Education

Oral Report Specifications

Rate each item from 5 to 1 with 5 indicating excellent and 1 indicating poor.

Presenter:

1. Presented a thesis about the topic.
2. Presented information logically.
3. Demonstrated an understanding of the topic.
4. Cited research support for the topic.
5. Established a position about the topic.
6. Encouraged questions.
7. Utilized appropriate materials for presentation (handouts/ transparencies/ etc.)
8. Appeared poised.
9. Made eye contact with total audience.
10. Maintained eye contact.
11. Enunciated clearly.
12. Gave evidence of prior rehearsal.
13. Used appropriate grammar.
14. Used appropriate gestures.
15. Kept within allotted time.

Additional Comments:

A. K. Blair
E. W. Holmes
Instructor
Spring, 1992

References

References

Applebee, Arthur N. (1987). Musing . . . teachers and the process of research. Language Arts, 64(7), 714-716.

Asher, Carla. (1987). Developing a pedagogy for a teacher-researcher program. English Education, 19(4), 211-219.

Bissex, Glenda. (1986). On becoming teacher experts: What's a teacher-researcher? Language Arts, 63(5), 482-484.

Bracey, Gerald. (1987). Reflective teachers. Phi Delta Kappan, 69(3), 233-235.

Burton, Frederick R. (1986). Research currents: A teacher's conception of the action research process. Language Arts, 63(7), 718-723.

D'Alessandro, Marilyn et al. (1992). Writing for publication: Voices from the classroom. The Reading Teacher, 45(6), 408-414.

Gable, Robert and Vincent Rogers. (1987). Taking the terror out of research. Phi Delta Kappan, 68(9), 690-695.

Good, Ronald. (1991). No royal road: More on improving the quality of published educational research. Educational Researcher, __( ), 24-25.

Goswami, Dixie and Peter R. Stillman. (Eds.). (1987). Reclaiming the classroom: Teacher research as an agency for change. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Holmes, Edward W. (Ed.). (1992). Issues in education: A journal of articles about education. Vol. 1, Spring. Towson, Maryland: Elementary Education Department, Towson State University.

Holmes, Edward W. (Ed.). (1991). Issues in education: A journal of articles about education. Vol. 1, Fall. Towson, Maryland: Elementary Education Department, Towson State University.

McConaghy, Thomas. (1987). Teachers as researchers: Learning through teaching. Phi Delta Kappan, 68(8), 630-631.

McKernan, James. (1988). Teacher as researcher: Paradigm and praxis. Contemporary Education, 59(3), 154-158.

Mohr, Marian M. and Marion S. Maclean. (1987). Working together: A guide for teacher-researchers. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Sklarz, David P. (1991). Writing for education journals. Here's How, 10(3), 1-4.